

SAMPLE

David

CONQUERING
KING,
CONQUERED
MAN

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David: Conquering King, Conquered Man

INTRODUCTION

King David accomplished many things in the forty years of his rule over Israel. He consolidated the kingdom, established its capital, expanded its territory, unified its people, and is mentioned more in the New Testament than Moses or Abraham. But David's greatest triumphs had less to do with military campaigns and external success and more to do with a virtually unseen campaign—the battle for his own mind and heart.

This study focuses on David's years as king: his victories and defeats and the lessons he learned through them all. He was a conquering king and more important a conquered man. A companion study, *David: A Godward Heart in a Drifting World*, covers David's early years.

It is important to get the word out every way possible. The following lesson titles and objectives are structured for use in newsletters, church bulletins, e-mail, and other sources such as *Facebook* and blogs.

LESSON ONE: THE GIANT WITHIN

Early in David's life, he fought and defeated the most infamous giant in history, Goliath. Now, as he was about to ascend to the throne, the king-to-be had to face his greatest giant of all—the one that hid within his own heart. In this session, we learn that the toughest battle is not with external enemies but rather with self.

LESSON TWO: TURNING POINT

Immediately following Saul's death, King David had two great decisions to make: how would he respond to the death of the man that had sought to kill him and what he would do about the dishonor brought on God's name when Israel lost the Ark of the Covenant. Both events served as tests of David's character and how he would deal with his own personal failure and success.

LESSON THREE: THE PROBLEM WITH SUCCESS

The first half of David's reign as king brought amazing success to the people he led. But during his highest point of rule, David succumbed to the most base of temptations. In this session, we learn the most dangerous times of life for a believer may not be when things are going bad but rather when everything seems perfect.

LESSON FOUR: FINAL EXAM

God worked to plant many life principles in David's life through both success and failure. Nearing the end of his reign, David was given a final exam in a most unusual way. How he reacted to this circumstance would dictate whether he truly was a man with a Godward heart. The test is simple and yet often failed; will we give to others the same grace that has been given to us?

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SESSION ONE

The Giant Within

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bibles
- Extra pens and pencils
- White board or poster board
- Handouts

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Early in David's life, he fought and defeated the most infamous giant in history, Goliath. Now, as he was about to ascend to the throne, the king-to-be had to face his greatest giant of all—the one that hid within his own heart. In this session, we learn that the toughest battle is not with external enemies but rather with self.

CONNECT

Begin this session by displaying a poster board or PowerPoint slide with the following diseases listed: Crohn's disease, Diabetes Type 1, Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis, and Rheumatoid Arthritis. Ask: *How many of you know someone with one of these physical problems? Does anyone know what all of these diseases have in common?*

All of these diseases are classified as autoimmune disorder. They are caused by the body attacking its own self because it mistakes normal cells as dangerous. In this session, we will learn about something present in every believer's life—self-centeredness. Unlike the autoimmune diseases, self-centeredness often remains unchecked within us until it does its damage.

During this study we will be considering several life principles learned from David, but are universal to all believers. Distribute the handout, "Principles to Live By," and go over the seven principles from David's early life covered in the study *David: A Godward Heart in a Drifting World*. Ask participants to fill in the blanks for the eighth principle on the handout.

John Bunyan's Pilgrim in *Pilgrim's Progress* found himself in a place he called the Slough of Despond. It was a deep, dark muddy hole of his own making where he saw things about himself he had never known or seen before. David ended up in the same kind of place while on the run from Saul.

Life Principle:

You will meet no greater enemy in life than the one that hides within you. That enemy is self.

CONSIDER

On the back of the "Principles to Live By" handout, ask participants to create two columns. At the top of the left column instruct them to write 1 Samuel 27:1, and at the top of the right column write 1 Samuel 30:8. Ask group members to compare the scripture passages



Once you start focusing on self, you are bound to make choices you will later regret!

and then write in each column what they think the most important phrase in each passage is. Tell them the group will answer this together at the end of the session.

A FORMULA FOR TROUBLE

Prepare a poster board or PowerPoint slide and add each part of this formula for trouble as you proceed. 1 Samuel 27 picks up the story at a high point in David's spiritual development. On several occasions, he showed exceptional spiritual maturity for a young man under such trying circumstances. In chapters 24-26, David did the following:

- Refused to kill Saul twice when given the opportunity. Ask: What reasons did David have to want to kill Saul? Considering Saul had sworn to kill David, a self-defense killing sounds like a good idea.
- When tempted to kill Nabal, he took the high road and chose not to. Nabal dealt treacherously with David, but he resisted the temptation to exact revenge.

In spite of this, David fell prey to a common formula for spiritual disaster.

WRONG VIEWPOINT

Call on someone to read 1 Samuel 27:1, and ask participants what important phrases they identified. Read the first phrase from the verse in as many translations as are present in the group. Verse one makes it plain that David is in trouble because he is looking at the problem from his viewpoint rather than God's. This one mistake plunged David into a 16-month period in which he wrote no psalm, prayed no prayer, and made numerous unseemly choices. Ask: *Why are spiritual highs often also dangerous times in our life?*

WRONG VIEWPOINT = PESSIMISTIC REASONING

Ask: *What is the first thing David thought when he got the wrong viewpoint?* Assign the following passages to various participants to read aloud: 1 Samuel 16:13-14; 24:20; 25:29-30. Everyone, including Saul, had recognized David's place as future king; yet David began to doubt what God had promised.

PESSIMISTIC REASONING = DESPERATE RATIONALIZATION

Ask: *Have you ever chosen a course of action in life that made no sense when you looked back at it later? What irrational decision did David make?* With his eyes on self, all David could come up with was to run to the Philistines. Display the life principle from the sidebar on a poster board or PowerPoint slide.

THE PROBLEM WITH DOING THINGS YOUR WAY

Divide participants into two groups and have them read 1 Samuel 27:1-7. Instruct them to come up with a list of what happened as a result of David getting focused on self rather than God. Write their findings on a poster or white board and then distribute the handout, "He Did It His Way." Encourage participants to note their discoveries on their handout as you proceed.

- You have company (27:2-3). Ask: *Have you ever made a bad decision that*



affected others in ways you didn't anticipate? There were others who followed David wherever he went; his family and some of the most oppressed people of Israel. Too often, your compromises become other people's compromises.

- You go places you don't belong (27:4). David followed his own desperate logic and took refuge among the sworn enemies of Israel.
- You get a false sense of security. Nothing bad happened to David at first, and he came to feel safe and comfortable there. Sin and disobedience have their own temporary pleasures and satisfactions. The longer we go without suffering negative consequences the safer we feel. The truth is, sin is fun for a season, and its consequences are often delayed.
- You become a slave to the enemy (27:5). David, the soon-to-be king of God's people actually called himself a servant to a pagan king. Read Romans 6:12-16, and then ask: *Have you ever found yourself enslaved to something? Did it control you more than you controlled it?*
- Slavery lasts longer than you ever expected (27:6-7). David went to stay a short time but ended up being there a year and four months.

COMMIT

Assign the following passages: 1 Samuel 27:8-12; 29:6-8; 30:1-6. Ask: *What was the end result of David's choice to follow his own way?* The life of a carnal believer eventually ends in duplicity and loss of identity. With nowhere else to turn, David was in great distress. Refer back to the handout "Principles to Live By" and ask the group what should have gone in the second column. Display a poster board or PowerPoint slide with the following:

1 Samuel 27:1	1 Samuel 30:8
David counseled himself	David sought God's counsel

Only when David sought God did he begin to find his way again. Lead the group in discussion about what we can do to help each other when we lose our way. Encourage participants to look at their own lives and examine whether they are making choice in life based on self or God's leadership.

Principles to Live By

1. Sometimes God leaves us in a problem to show us who we really are. His purpose is to pull us back to a living relationship with Him.
2. When we stray from God, He may remove everything we cling to until we return to Him.
3. What we want often becomes something we wish we could get rid of.
4. God seldom works the way we expect so expect to be surprised when God works.
5. You will never be more faithful and true to God in the spotlight than you were when no one was looking.
6. When you tolerate the giants of life, they will take over your territory. Territory lost is always twice as hard to regain.
7. Pick your battles very carefully. Christians often get caught up in fighting each other and secondary things.
8. You will meet no greater enemy in life than the one that hides _____. And that is self.

Session One
**STUDENT
HANDOUT 2**

He Did It His Way

You have company (27:2-3)

You go places you don't belong (27:4)

You get a false sense of security

You become a slave to the enemy (27:5)

That slavery lasts longer than you ever expected (27:6-7)

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